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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A.J.Ph.</i>	<i>The American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>A.J.S.L.L.</i>	<i>The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
<i>A.N.F.</i>	<i>Arkiv for Nordisk Filologi</i>
<i>A.S.N.S.L.</i>	<i>Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen</i>
<i>A.R.</i>	<i>Archivum Romanicum</i>
<i>B.H.</i>	<i>Bulletin Hispanique</i>
<i>C.J.</i>	<i>The Classical Journal</i>
<i>E.St.</i>	<i>Englische Studien</i>
<i>F.F.C.</i>	<i>Folklore Fellows Communications</i>
<i>G.R.M.</i>	<i>Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift</i>
<i>H.B.V.</i>	<i>Hessische Blätter für Volkskunde</i>
<i>J.A.F.</i>	<i>The Journal of American Folk-Lore</i>
<i>J.E.G.Ph.</i>	<i>The Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
<i>K.H.M.</i>	<i>Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm</i>
<i>Kl. Schr.</i>	<i>Kleinere Schriften</i>
<i>M.L.N.</i>	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
<i>M.L.R.</i>	<i>The Modern Language Review</i>
<i>M.Ph.</i>	<i>Modern Philology</i>
<i>M.S.G.V.</i>	<i>Mitteilungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde</i>
<i>N.M.</i>	<i>Neuphilologische Mitteilungen</i>
<i>N.S.M.</i>	<i>Nuovi Studi Medievali</i>
<i>N.T.T.</i>	<i>Nieuw Theologisch Tijdschrift</i>
<i>P.M.L.A.</i>	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
<i>R.C.</i>	<i>Revue Celtique</i>
<i>R.E.T.P.</i>	<i>Revue d'Ethnographie et des traditions populaires</i>
<i>R.H.</i>	<i>Revue Hispanique</i>
<i>Rh.M.</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
<i>R.L.C.</i>	<i>Revue de Littérature comparée</i>
<i>R.R.</i>	<i>The Romanic Review</i>
<i>R.T.P.</i>	<i>Revue des Traditions populaires</i>
<i>S.A.V.</i>	<i>Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde</i>
<i>S.S.N.</i>	<i>Scandinavian Studies and Notes</i>
<i>Z.D.A.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum</i>
<i>Z.D.Ph.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie</i>
<i>Z.F.S.L.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur</i>
<i>Z.N.V.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für niederdeutsche Volkskunde</i>
<i>Z.R.Ph.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie</i>
<i>Z.R.W.V.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für rheinische und westfälische Volkskunde</i>
<i>Z.V.V.</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde</i>

## CHAPTER V

### THE MIGRATORY LEGEND

THE term 'migratory legend' is a translation of the German *Wandersage*. By it we mean a narrative of a certain length, usually shorter than a fairy tale, in prose, existing in a limited number of variants, some, if not all, of which may become localized in quite different places. The number of motives is, generally speaking, large enough and their order sufficiently stable to preclude the theory of polygenesis. But the number of known variants does not as a rule suffice to allow of an analysis and a comparative study according to the principles of the geographic-historical method. That means that we must suppose such a legend to have originated in a definite place and at a definite time, though we are usually unable to determine either. Nor does a migratory legend presuppose a definite basis in popular belief or practice. On the contrary, the same legend may be grafted on quite different beliefs or practices. The local legend, as we saw, is stationary, though the motives composing it may and do migrate at least over a limited territory. The migratory legend may migrate over wide expanses of land.

One of the best examples of a migratory legend, one of the few, it may be added, of which we definitely know the origin and history, is the tale of the *Victim's Last Words*. A child about to be walled in as a foundation sacrifice (in Europe) makes some remark which moves the bystanders to tears. In the Near East the child is to be killed because the king wishes to be cured from a disease (usually leprosy) by bathing in its blood. The child is delivered up by its parents who have been bribed by a large sum of money, and when facing death is seen to laugh. When asked for the reason of this mysterious laugh, it observes that ordinarily children seek refuge with their parents and, if orphans, with the king, but in his case parents and monarch are allied to take his life. Still farther east, in India, the child is to be sacrificed to a demon, and his parents and the king hold

it, while the priest prepares the sacrifice. There follows again the mysterious laugh and the explanation given: Parents, king and priest act contrary to the rule prescribing how they should act, and only in order to save their present miserable and wretched lives, having no regard for their re-births to come, which will depend upon their conduct in this life. In other words, the tale is one of those invented to exemplify the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism. From India it migrated, first to the countries of the Near East, being slightly modified in the process, and from the Near East it reached Europe, where it was grafted on the stem of the old foundation sacrifice, and at the same time lost its original point, having sunk to the low intellectual level of the mediaeval peasantry.<sup>1</sup>

No less instructive is the history of the so-called *Secundus Biography*. It is the story of the philosopher who tempts his own mother in order to test the truth of the maxim that there is nothing good in women. As is to be foreseen, she succumbs to the temptation; he makes himself known to her, and she dies from the shock. This tale occurs in the Indian *Jatakam*, where the action is distributed over two personages, teacher and pupil. At the behest of the former the pupil makes love to the teacher's old mother and induces her to slay her son. When she is told about the trick played upon her she dies on the spot; but the pupil is now convinced of the utter worthlessness of women, and like the Western *Secundus* he takes upon himself a terrible vow. There can be no doubt whatever that this Indian story migrated west, its action being simplified and fused with the Jewish tale of the *Emperor and the Philosopher*. When the two leading male characters were reduced to one, the incest motive took the place of the attempted murder.<sup>2</sup>

Lest I be accused of undue partisanship for Benfey's Indianist theory, I shall adduce a migratory legend about the *Near Eastern* origin of which there can be little doubt. I refer to the tale of the wise *Ahikar*, according to all available evidence of Semitic provenance. *Ahikar*, it will be recalled, loses the king's favour thanks to the slander of an ungrateful nephew, *Nadan*. He escapes with his life, being concealed in the house of a grateful friend. The monarch receives an ultimatum from another king who, having heard of *Ahikar's* presumed death, demands a number of impossible things. *Ahikar* is produced, leads the other king *ad absurdum* and is reinstated in the royal favour, his nephew receiving the punishment he so justly deserves. Now very much the same story occurs in mediaeval India, where however the figure of the ungrateful nephew has disappeared and the

monarch bears the latter's name. The action has thus been reduced from three protagonists to only two. But this simplification itself points to the secondary and derivative character of the Indian version.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the Old English *Beowulf* rests to all appearances upon a very ancient migratory legend which ran as follows. The hero in defending a homestead against a demon wrenched out the latter's arm, followed the trace of the blood to a body of water in which the demon had his dwelling, plunged into its depth and there slew him. The story occurs in much the same form in the mediaeval Indian *Kathâ Sarit Sâgara*, where it is connected, however, with Near Eastern material (the story of Tobit). Hence the inference is justified that the legend originated somewhere in the Near East and from there migrated both in a westerly and an easterly direction.<sup>4</sup>

Near Eastern, too, is a certain well-known werewolf story. The hero has been transformed into a werewolf, usually by a wicked wife whose practices of the magic arts he has imprudently watched. In wolf-shape he rescues the child of a king, which good action leads to his recovery of his human shape and to the punishment of the sorceress. The tale is widely current in Celtic Europe; but its occurrence in a Sudanese variant, where it is fused with other Near Eastern material, leaves no doubt about its Eastern origin.<sup>5</sup>

Eastern, too, is the famous legend of Buridan, the scholar who unmasks the wicked queen who used to slay her lovers after having had her fill of love. This strange story had its origin in the Babylonian Ishtar legend, the love of that goddess meaning death to the heroes whom she seduced. This tale appears to have spread over the Mediterranean countries, especially Italy, whence at the time of the bloom of the great Italian universities it was carried to France and Germany, no doubt by wandering scholars. For Buridan, the hero, is himself a typical scholar and an historical personage besides.<sup>6</sup>

The well-known legend of the Wandering Jew, the origins of which are still veiled in obscurity,<sup>7</sup> is also, no doubt, semi-learned. It is difficult to dissociate his figure from that of Al-Khidr, one of the Arabic prophets who is believed to wander about, enjoying everlasting life, rewarding the good and punishing the wicked. With the crusades Europeans became familiar with this legendary figure, and out of it developed the character of Ahasuerus or Isaac Laquedam. But there can be little doubt that owing to purely learned influences the Wandering Jew became an allegory of the Jewish people, persecuted and hunted down as it was,

until the Great Revolution effected a change for the better. To quote the French novelist Claude Tillier<sup>8</sup>:

The Wandering Jew is the image of the Jewish nation drawn by some unknown poet of the people on the wall of a peasant's hut. This myth is so striking that one must be blind not to see through it. The Wandering Jew has no roof, no hearth, no legal and political domicile: the Jewish people has no country. The Wandering Jew is obliged to roam without rest, without stopping, without taking a breath. . . . He has already gone seven times around the world. The Jewish people is nowhere settled definitely; it lives everywhere under tents; it wanders to and fro, like the waves of the ocean and floats, like the foam, on the surface of the nations. Like a piece of straw it is carried by the current of civilization and has by this time gone many times around the world. The Wandering Jew has always five cents in his pockets. The Jewish people, constantly brought to ruin by the exactions of princes, has always regained its prosperity. . . . Its opulence has grown again by itself. The Wandering Jew can spend only five cents at a time. The Jewish people, obliged to conceal its riches, has become miserly and parsimonious; it spends little. The punishment of the Wandering Jew will last forever. The Jewish people can no more be reunited as a nation than the ashes of an oak struck by the lightning can again be made to constitute a tree. It will be dispersed over the surface of the globe to the end of time.

However that may be—and this allegorical character of the story has been hotly denied—we are assuredly dealing with a legend that is essentially migratory in character.

All English readers will recall the German story of the cruel bishop Hatto of Mainz who was eaten up by mice in punishment for his hardness of heart. In that form the legend is localized at the *Mäuseturm* near Bingen on the Rhine. It owes this localization to a popular etymology, *Mautturm*, i.e. customs tower, having been taken for *Mäuseturm*; but the tale itself is far older than the tower and besides is localized in at least a dozen different spots all over Western and Central Europe.<sup>9</sup> How it spread, we do not know; but at the basis is the ancient belief that the human soul after death assumes the shape of a mouse. The mice which eat the cruel bishop are simply the souls of the innocent people he had caused to be burned alive. Still, there can be no talk of polygenesis so far as this legend is concerned; for the motives of the burning of hungry people and their ghostly revenge upon their torturer are certainly altogether too individual and too definitely shaped to admit of several independent inventions in different places and at different times.

The same holds true, I believe, for the famous story told by Gregory of Tours about the Frankish king Guntchram. When

that monarch was having a nap in the open air the soldier who watched him saw a mouse slip out of his mouth and run toward a narrow ditch. The soldier laid his sword across it, the mouse passed over and entered a tumulus on the other side. After a while it came out again, crossed the sword bridge and slipped back into the king's mouth, who thereupon woke up and told the soldier a dream he had had. He had dreamt that he was going over a steel bridge and into a treasure house. When the tumulus was opened, a considerable treasure was found inside. This story occurs in a large number of variants both in Europe and India.<sup>10</sup> Dr. Hans Naumann in a recent study inclines toward an explanation by the theory of polygenesis. It must of course be admitted that the fundamental belief at the bottom of the story—the mouse-shaped soul—is fairly ubiquitous. Yet the details, in particular the finding of the treasure, are in my view far too distinct to allow of such an explanation. The tale originated in one place and from there rapidly spread in all directions, the more easily because its fundamental idea would be understood everywhere, at least wherever man had reached the animistic stage of religious development.

Sometimes the casual mention of a name that will obstinately stick to the story throughout all its vicissitudes will furnish a valuable clue. Thus the story of the *Dream of the Treasure on the Bridge* does seem to have been first told in England and about London Bridge, though I am far from sharing the other speculations of Sir Lawrence Gomme in this connexion. Anyhow, the narrative is an excellent example of a migratory legend, since it is found in most European countries.<sup>11</sup>

In a few cases certain variants of a legend will be explained by historical migration, whilst others must have arisen by polygenesis. The best example is furnished by the legend of the *Sparrows of Cirencester*. The idea of setting a besieged town on fire by attaching burning materials to the birds that have their nests on its houses is in this form simply one of the numerous stratagems attributed to the Normans when all Europe was frightened, not to say terrorized, by their piratical expeditions. It has two roots, viz., the ancient belief in fire-carrying birds, recorded by Pliny and simply an off-shoot of the belief in the bird who carried the heavenly fire down to man, and a ritual known from the story of Samson and the foxes, and the foxes of Carseoli mentioned in Ovid's *Fasti*. If the story of the stratagem is told of Norman chiefs, as it is in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* and some other mediaeval compilations, or current in countries which, as England, have been for years under Norman influence, some historical

connexion will best account for the migration. No doubt, the Normans who must have felt highly flattered by the praise of their own ingenuity, rather encouraged than stemmed it. However, when the same or a similar story occurs in Bohemia, in Hungary, and in West Africa, the theory of polygenesis will account for those variants, the more so because we definitely know the ritual at the base of the story of Samson, who utilized not birds but foxes to the detriment of his enemies the Philistines.<sup>12</sup>

Often a legend, though localized in a definite country, still betrays its foreign origin by its essentially isolated character. All English readers will remember the tale of the German poet Tannhäuser, an historical personage of the thirteenth century, his adventures in the mountain of Venus and at the papal court,<sup>13</sup> his confession before the Holy Father, not altogether discreet if we are to believe the poet:

Frau Venus ist eine schöne Frau,  
Liebreizend und anmutreiche;  
Wie Sonnenschein und Blumenduft  
Ist ihre Stimme, die weiche.

Wenn ich den ganzen Himmel besäss,  
Frau Venus schenkt ich ihn gerne;  
Ich gäb' ihr die Sonne, ich gäb' ihr den Mond,  
Ich gäbe ihr sämtliche Sterne,

and its purely negative result:

Der Teufel, den man Venus nennt,  
Er ist der Schlimmste von allen:  
Erretten kann ich dich nimmermehr  
Aus seinen schönen Krallen.

The legend is utterly un-German and non-popular. It is un-German because Teutonic mythology knows nothing about a figure corresponding to the classical Aphrodite—the goddess Freya is known in Sweden only—and nothing of a sort of terrestrial paradise in the interior of a mountain, though an Icelandic tale tells of a mountain as the dwelling place of souls after death. It is non-popular because Tannhäuser never seems to have been known outside court circles, because he is connected with the historical pope Urban IV, who was really his contemporary, and because there is no parallel legend to be found anywhere in Teutonic countries, though there are plenty of *Venusberge* in Germany. Were the legend genuinely Teutonic, Tannhäuser would have entered a place more resembling the Norse Valhöl of Viking times; were it popular, it would not be Tannhäuser who



had the adventure, but some more popular character, certainly no man of letters. Very much the same story is related by the Frenchman Antoine de la Salle, who localizes it in Italy, though the hero is again a German knight. Now it must be recalled that essentially the same tale is told of the Scottish poet Thomas of Erceldoune, called the Rhymer, where Venus and her maidens are however genuine elves or fairies of the Celtic variety. In fact, that wonderful kingdom of Venus, whether in Germany or in Italy, has no parallel whatever either in ancient Greek and Roman religion or in the Teutonic Middle Ages, but it resembles to a point the Irish *Tir-na-nogue*, the Land of Youth, where the heroes pass their time in everlasting bliss, ignoring the maxim

Zwischen Sinnenglück und Seelenfrieden  
Bleibt dem Menschen nur die bange Wahl.

As for Venus herself, she is of course neither the Greek Aphrodite, gently ridiculed by Homer, nor the mother of Aeneas, essentially a very serious person, nor even the Oriental Astarte with her cruderies. She is purely and simply that glorious goddess celebrated by Lucretius in one of the most wonderful hymns of all times, the counterpart of the Greek Physis, the personification of life-giving Nature. There can then be little doubt that the German Tannhäuser Legend is essentially Celtic, that it migrated from Celtic England to Germany, the figure of the poet Thomas, unknown on the continent, being taken by that of Tannhäuser. The Irish fairies being likewise unknown in Germany, they were replaced by Venus and her ladies, the *tertium comparationis* being, of course, their marvellous beauty and their amatory qualities. Who can legitimately be supposed guilty of the transplantation? The answer is obvious: the names alone furnish it. They were the scholars, of course, the *Vagantes*, the creators of the mediaeval Latin love lyric, the very ones who traversed Europe from one end to the other and who would naturally choose one of their own order, a man of letters, that is, to be the hero of their tale. So after all, the English, when they enjoy Wagner's opera, may console themselves with the thought that they are getting back what in part at least was once their own.

Almost the same is true of the equally famous tale of the *Knight of the Swan*,<sup>14</sup> though in this case the transmitters were not so much the scholars as the clerics. The lovely myth is in its present form essentially a creation of the country between the Meuse and the Rhine. In fact, it no doubt owes its diffusion and popularity to the armorial ambitions of two Dutch noble families, the counts of Boulogne and the counts of Bouillon. When the

latter became celebrated all over Europe as a consequence of the First Crusade the legend of the house reached wider circles and thus attracted the attention of poets and story-tellers. That legend is in its essential features a queer combination of the highly melodramatic and sentimental fairy tale of the *Innocent and Persecuted Queen*, and the migratory legend of the *Demon Wife*, of which more anon. On these tales was then grafted the lovely Irish legend of the *Children of Lir*, transformed into swans by their wicked stepmother. How did it reach the Low Countries? The answer is not difficult to find. The tenth century is marked by the Danish invasions of Ireland, leading to the wholesale destruction of Irish monasteries and the massacre of Irish monks and secular priests. This catastrophe caused an emigration on a large scale of Irish clerics, who took refuge in the convents of the Continent, in France, the Low Countries, and Germany. It was they, no doubt, who spread on the Continent the Irish tale of the children converted into swans and condemned to live in that form for centuries until redeemed by a Christian bell and a Christian priest.

A whole cluster of migratory and local legends in strange combination make up the cycle of the *King in the Mountain*.<sup>15</sup> As is well known, in Celtic, Teutonic and Slavonic countries we find, usually quite well localized, the tale of a king shut up in the interior of a mountain, whence he will one day break forth to restore his country to its pristine splendour. In Germany, where the tale was originally connected with the name of Frederick II, it is usually derived from ancient Teutonic notions about the world of the dead being located in the interior of a mountain, a belief of which we find traces even in far-off Iceland. Such a basis is, however, far from sufficient to explain the legendary cycle in question, and for the following reasons. In Germany Frederick II was indeed the first monarch thus to be connected with this group of legends. Yet this monarch was not only not very popular in Germany; he was regarded there with more or less indifference, for the very valid reason that most of his energies were devoted to his Italian possessions, where also he fought his battles, and hardly, if at all, to Germany. Consequently, after his death he left but few regrets north of the Alps but all the more in Italy, where moreover his partisans soon fared ill, losing all their power after 1266 and for the most part living in exile. His 'second coming', then, would have been a godsend to the Italian Ghibellines, but not at all to the German partisans of the Hohenstaufen, persecuted by no one.

To this simple consideration must be added a fact of a purely

chronological nature. Long before we hear of the legend of the King in the Mountain north of the Alps, the Italians knew of King Arthur living in the interior of Mt. Aetna. Now King Arthur's second coming was indeed eagerly expected by the Celtic world of Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, so much so that Henry II, to lay such rumours and hopes, felt it useful to have the genuine tomb of the old British king 'discovered'. To this day King Arthur is still supposed to slumber in more than one of the mountains of Wales. If it is asked how he got into Mt. Aetna, the answer is simple. It was the Normans who had carried his legend thither, with most of the rest of the Arthurian Romance Cycle.<sup>16</sup> What happened then was, shortly, this. The Ghibellines of Sicily, Frederick II's kingdom to which he devoted all his care, transferred to their dead leader the story told before him of Arthur, who to them was but a monarch of fairy-land. The Italian Ghibellines then transmitted the story in this new form to the German partisans of the Hohenstaufen, many of whom served moreover in the army of Manfred, Frederick's son, and fought in the battle of Benevento, in 1266.

The notion of a great monarch of old returning to bring back to his people the golden age might possibly be considered as so deep-rooted in human psychology that a spontaneous origin in different places and at different periods might be postulated. What favours such a view is the curious tradition hailing from Mexico, according to which the natives saw in the butcher Cortez and his brigands such a god-king returning from over the seas. If they did, no people was ever doomed to a greater disappointment. However that may be, in Europe at least this belief is linked up with so many curious details, such as the dead tree sprouting afresh, the last battle, etc., that all ideas of an independent origin must at once be discarded. On the contrary, we have here the old Jewish messianic legend in a new form, and the Oriental origin of these beliefs cannot possibly be called into question. These messianic ideas, which originated in far-off Babylon many centuries previously and migrated to the Occident toward the end of the Roman civil wars, must therefore be presumed to have furnished the basis of this curious cluster of legends, justly famous all over Europe, from Ireland to Bohemia and from Southern Italy to Denmark.

What facilitated its spread was naturally the human, all too human, fancy to seek the golden age in the past and to associate it with the name of some ruler, usually the last of a reigning family, who was thus identified with the national grandeur. That this ruler, more often than not, was simply a vainglorious numskull,

like Charles the Bold of Burgundy, or an odious tyrant, like Napoleon I, merely attests to universal human stupidity, whilst 'the wiser sort', as the Scottish historian Major puts it, 'who knew the groundlessness of this belief, were yet unwilling to go contrary to it, lest the ignorant in their indignation should destroy them'.<sup>17</sup> No doubt he remembered the words of Alanus ab Insulis on the Welsh, who were ready to lynch anyone who should dare deny the immortality of Arthur and his coming back to free the British Celts from the Saxon yoke.

I do not wish to leave the important subject of the mediaeval Irish influences on the folk-lore of the Continent without drawing attention to another interesting point which requires monographic treatment.

In Western Germany, particularly in the Rhine country, there exist rock formations variously called *Brunechild's Bed* or *Brunechild's Chair*. German scholars have generally and without further ado seen in these names clear allusions to the Nibelungen Cycle. The matter is, however, a little more complicated. For in the first place there existed an historical queen Brunechildis ruling precisely over that part of the Frankish realm to which the Rhine and all of Southern and Western Germany at least nominally belonged. That queen, who was one of those characters that mark for centuries the history of their country with the impress of their personality, may well be as much responsible for the names in question as the legendary wife of the Burgundian king Gunther. What is even more curious is that in Ireland we find identical rock formations which there bear the name of *Bed of Dermot and Grania* and which are moreover the scene of certain fertility rites. Now if one remembers that the Rhine country was the very centre of the activity of Irish missionaries in Merovingian times and that with one of them in particular, Saint Columbanus, the Frankish queen Brunechildis was not on the friendliest terms, one cannot help suspecting some connexion between the facts just pointed out. However, no definite judgment can be pronounced on the subject until further inquiry with a careful utilization of all the material bearing on the question.

Our mention of the Frankish Brunechildis, who was certainly a *valandinne* (as the Middle High German poet accuses Krimhild of being) and who, in the mind of Saint Columbanus at least, was identified with the Devil, brings us back to the story of the *Demon Wife*, that is, the tale of the mortal contracting a union with a superhuman wife. This motive may occur in three different forms. The wife may consent to be married to him on condition that he observes a certain taboo. When he breaks it, she

promptly leaves him. This motive is the central incident of a well-known and widespread fairy tale the Indian origin of which was proved recently by the geographic-historical method.<sup>18</sup> In the second form the breaking of the taboo has for consequence not only the departure of the wife but the death (or blinding) of the husband. In this form the story occurs in Sicily in ancient times, the lover of a goddess being blinded when he commits an act of unfaithfulness, that is, falls in love with a mortal. The best known mediaeval variant is the tale of Peter of Staufenberg and his invisible fairy wife. When against her warning he marries a mortal woman, she appears to him one last time warning him of his impending death. This form appears to be essentially Mediterranean, being merely a derivative of the ancient motive that intercourse with a goddess means death or blindness for the mortal, as shown by the stories of Iasion and Demeter and of Anchises and Venus.

One of the most delightful versions was told by Charon of Lampsakos and has been preserved, luckily, by a scholiast.<sup>19</sup>

The Cnidian Rhoikos saves the nymph of an oak-tree by supporting her tree. In reward she grants him her love on condition that he would avoid henceforth all intercourse with other women. A bee is the messenger and go-between. One day, as Rhoikos was sitting at a game of draughts, the bee came flying; but the boor, preferring his game to an hour of tryst with his fair one, gave her a rude welcome. The bee duly reported the insult, and the nymph, justly indignant, paralysed him in punishment.

This version bears all the earmarks of a late modification. The express condition that he is to remain loyal to the nymph appears as a blind motive, whilst the anger of the fairy-mistress is provoked by quite another matter, the hero's boorishness, which moreover ill accords with his kindness and charity in supporting the oak-tree. We shall therefore not be far wrong if we assume that in the lost original text he was guilty, not so much of a breach of etiquette and good manners, as of a breach of his plighted word.

Nor is this story type unknown in Scandinavia. In the long *Saga of Olaf Trygvason* we are told how the hero, Helgi Thorisson, has fallen into the power of the fair Ingeborg of the Glittering Plains, clearly an otherworld creature. He is released by the prayers of King Olaf, but the jealous fairy-mistress blinds him, lest the daughters of Norway enjoy his love, i.e., according to the well-known mediaeval notion that the eyes are the chief instrument of captivation, lest he fall in love with a mortal.<sup>20</sup>

In the last of the three forms enumerated above, the demon wife has no other purpose than that of destroying, by vampire-like methods, the family of her husband, especially her step-children. This variant is unquestionably of Indian origin, the woman being a rakshasa who has assumed a fair shape. In India tales of this type occur in some of the oldest collections and are still current in modern folk-lore: in the Occident they are more or less isolated, though there is certainly no want of evil step-mothers. The *Swan Knight* tale is, I believe, one of the earliest European variants of this third form.

A story migration of this sort is of course not without certain consequences for the story. The very fact that it is told and retold and that there are good, bad and indifferent story-tellers very often alters the tale beyond recognition. A very good example is furnished by the French romance *La Fille du comte de Pontieu*.

A husband and wife, going on a pilgrimage, are set upon by robbers, who tie the husband to a tree and do violence to the woman. When they are gone, the wife takes her husband's sword and wants to kill him, but inadvertently cuts his ropes, thus setting him free.

No explanation for her strange conduct is given in the romance, and modern students have advanced the strangest and most unlikely and far-fetched theories. The incident becomes clear at once if we realize that the story in question is but a Western variant of the Indian tale of the *Disloyal Wife*. The woman, in the archetype, falls in love with the robber-captain and wishes to kill her husband in good earnest, failing, however, in the attempt. The story, by the way, is a typical migratory legend; we have not only very ancient Indian variants but even the Near Eastern links which explain its history.<sup>21</sup>

The French romance just discussed and its cognate versions, both Western and Oriental, are but one type in a whole cycle which may fitly be called the *Cycle of the Disloyal Wife*. Gaston Paris, shortly before his death, in 1903, treated another type of this cycle in a masterly study<sup>22</sup> and conclusively proved its Oriental provenance. In a third type, clearly influenced by the migratory legend of the witch-goddess who transforms her lovers, the better half of an evidently very successful union by marriage transforms her partner into an animal, a dog, a wolf, a donkey, in an Icelandic variant even into a crane, either out of mere spite or because he had watched her in some act of witchery. The unfortunate husband regains his human shape, either thanks to the interference of another magician of the fair sex or by a lucky

accident. He then proceeds to transform his former wife in her turn. The type is unquestionably of Oriental origin, but it reached Ireland and even Iceland in the early Middle Ages. So far it has received no adequate monographic treatment.<sup>23</sup>

A story for which the theory of polygenesis has been advanced but which is, to my view, a typical migratory legend, is the Andromeda tale.<sup>24</sup> Sir James G. Frazer attempted to derive it from the practice of human sacrifice, made, especially, to rivers, and he quotes a variant from Central Africa where the monster in question is simply one of the numerous crocodiles infesting the river. One may also recall the Egyptian custom of the bride of the Nile, as it may be called. We may admit the correctness of all these observations and yet doubt the genesis as proposed by the great English scholar. In the first place, the story is found all over the Old World, even in countries—like Japan—where there are no crocodiles. Secondly, one would have to assume, to judge from the vast number of variants, that in former times people were as much addicted to wholesale human sacrifice as were the ancient Aztecs; thirdly, that in the New World, where the story was originally not found, no such custom existed and that the American alligators were less propitiated than the Old World crocodiles. In the fourth place, we know only too well how sensitive people are with regard to the importance of such sacrifice. Even now certain peoples in the heart of Europe refuse to save a drowning person, adducing as a reason, sincerely no doubt, that the river must not be deprived of its victim. A Perseus bold enough to interfere with such a practice would therefore have run great risk of being slain by the populace before he had a chance to fight the monster. In the last place, how does it happen that in certain countries, India and Persia, the victim is preferably a boy and practically never a girl? Is it to be argued that in those countries the victim was always male, whilst in the rest of the Old World it was female? I am rather inclined to believe that the tale originated in one place, though it is practically impossible to determine it—the number of motives is far too small—and that from there it migrated to all parts of the Old World. The story, extremely simple and presupposing only the most rudimentary of psychic reactions, the idea of chivalry in the male, no doubt originated in prehistoric times.

The reader may well ask by this time with M. Bédier why it is that tales migrate from certain countries to certain others, why certain countries, that is, should have the privilege of manufacturing stories for the benefit of others as it were. Th. Benfey had tried to answer that very question when he connected his

Indianist theory with the work of the Buddhist propagandists. Under the fervour of religious impulse, he argued, stories in the shape of *exempla*, of parables, were scattered wherever Buddhist missionaries laboured, both in the Far East and in the Mediterranean countries. It would be vain to deny that there is a good deal of truth in this assumption. The famous romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, essentially of an edifying nature, was undoubtedly spread in Persia by Buddhist propagandists, and the wholesale importation of motives current in the ancient Sanskrit literature into China and Japan is due to the same religious movement. Where I venture to differ from Benfey, siding with M. Bédier, is over the former scholar's slight overrating of oral tradition at the expense of the written one. After all, the translation into Chinese and Pehlevi of Buddhist compilations written in Sanskrit had certainly as far-reaching effects as any oral propagation of *exempla*, certainly among an essentially literary people such as the ancient Chinese. Where Benfey was manifestly wrong was in his ascription to India exclusively of all the master-tales that have cheered mankind as far back as we have any historical knowledge of the human race. Such an assumption was after all a gross exaggeration, and India is, as we have seen, an important enough centre of story-telling but by no means the *only* important one. Neither is it admissible always to associate the diffusion of tales with some religious movement. Some other, more deep-lying, reason must be sought to account for the phenomenon.

Story-telling is no doubt identical with what in the history of literature is called the 'prose narrative'. The fact that the one requires pen and ink whilst the other is transmitted from mouth to ear is merely accidental and has no other consequence than a greater degree of independence of the different variants. Now good prose narrative is not a gift common to all peoples any more than the art of story-telling is a gift common to all individuals. Certain ones will excel in it, whilst others are indifferent or downright inferior. The Ionians possessed the art in supreme degree; in Attica it was more or less of an Ionian importation; the Spartans lacked it altogether and, being well aware of this shortcoming, gloried in Laconic conciseness, i.e. dryness. The ancient Hebrews excelled in the art; witness the Old Testament, the Talmud and the Midrash; Rome in her greatness did not produce a single good *raconteur*, for Petronius was a cosmopolitan steeped in Hellenic culture, and Apuleius a Semite. Similarly, in the Middle Ages, the master story-tellers were three nations; the French, the Irish, and the Icelanders, to which one might add the half-Oriental Byzantine Greeks and the Arabs.



The result of this state of affairs is that those who have give to those who lack, and exchange with those who also have. Illustrations will come to mind at once. Herodotus went to Athens to be admired; in his native Ionia he would not have attracted much attention. The Romans plundered Hellenic mythology on a large scale—certainly not for religious reasons. The Greeks, especially the late Greeks, borrowed from the Semites the Ahikar Romance, from the Syrians the *Book of Sindibad*, from the Alexandrian Jews the story of the *Emperor and the Abbot*, from the Egyptians the tale of the *Master Thief*. The Hebrews took from the Greeks the story of Minos and Scylla, attributing the adventure to Moses and a Sudanese princess, from the Semitized Persians the Esther story, from India the tale of the Brahmins resuscitating a lion and most of the stories of their Solomon cycle. In the Middle Ages French fiction dominated the European continent, and French romances were translated even into Czech and Icelandic. Middle English and Middle High German narrative art are unthinkable without the omnipresent French influence. The Irish prose saga not only left a deep impress upon Welsh literature; it migrated directly to England, France, Iceland, and went as far south as Italy and Spain. The Old Norse prose narrative, as cultivated in Iceland, gave themes to the Irish, the English, and the continental Germans. Byzantine and Arabic themes in the same period flooded all Europe reaching the West and North by three main routes, through Spain, through the French crusaders and through Russia.

A few examples, chiefly from Western and Northern Europe, and with India out of the game, will help to elucidate the foregoing statements. Mention has been made, in a previous chapter, of the strange tale relating how the hero imagines that he has undergone all sorts of adventures, taking years, in the Other-world, only to discover in the end that it was all an illusion and that only a few minutes have passed. This story, we know, has its origin in the Oriental hashish dream; but it reached Ireland in the early Middle Ages and assumed there a typical Irish form. The hero is called away from a feast by fairy messengers who request him to assist one party of fairies against another in the bright Tir-na-nogue. The war ended, he is given a fairy-wife with whom he lives contented and has a family. After many years (as he thinks) he wants to revisit Ireland and on coming home finds his companions still sitting around the caldron where he had left them. This story reached Italy and was there incorporated in the oldest collection of *novelle*. The Italians slightly modified it, changing the Irish feast into a banquet given by the

emperor Frederick II and the Irish fairies into magicians. The Oriental parallels which have the same origin, i.e. the hashish dream, are altogether different, and thus there is no getting around the Irish medium. Nor is the fact in itself surprising: the Danish and Anglo-Norman invasions had driven forth too many Irishmen who had sought a new home on the European Continent.<sup>25</sup> Yet there is still more to the strange theme under discussion.

In the fourteenth century the Spanish prince Juan Manuel wrote a collection of tales which do not compare unfavourably with those of the *Decameron*. One of these has for scene the old city of Toledo, famous for the magic arts taught there by Arabic sages. The hero is precisely such an one, who is sought after by an ambitious ecclesiastic of the Christian persuasion eager to become an adept in magic. Nor is he miserly in good promises. While they are still sitting in the savant's cabinet, successive messengers arrive announcing promotions and preferments to the ecclesiastic. Each time the magician asks him for a favour and is refused. When finally he becomes too insistent, the worthy canon threatens him with the Inquisition. Then he calls out and has two turkeys brought in, which he had ordered to be fried at the beginning of the interview, and the good canon realizes that all he has witnessed was but an illusion, that only a short time has elapsed and that the magician has merely wanted to sound his true character—and succeeded.

At first blush one would without hesitation ascribe this tale to the Oriental art and ultimately to the hashish dream. The environment, at all events, is as Oriental as any environment can well be. Yet there is more to the tale. An Icelandic text relates the following events. A certain viking is lying with a small fleet in the harbour of a certain town. His circumstances are none too brilliant when a magician accosts him and offers to bring about his marriage with the widowed princess ruling over that town. In return he exacts only a trifling tribute. The viking is only too glad to consent to the proposal. Everything works out well, as he believes; he marries the heiress, obtains wealth enough and for some time even keeps the promise given. But after a while he tires of the magician and bluntly repels him—only to see himself again on his viking ship in the harbour, a poor bachelor. What he had believed to be years had been but a dream of a few minutes, brought about by the magician who wanted to test him. It is of course clear that this story cannot possibly be dissociated from the Spanish tale cited before, nor from the Irish story that had wandered as far as Italy. With the former it shares the motive of the test and the hero's ingrati-

tude, with the latter the illusory marriage. The environment, to be sure, is neither Oriental nor Irish, but typically Scandinavian. We shall not be far wrong if we assume that this story, ultimately of Oriental origin (the hashish dream basis), was worked up by the Irish and transmitted by them to the Spaniards on the one hand, to the Icelanders on the other.

In Mediaeval Iceland we find the strange story of a wise master coming to offer his services as tutor to a king's son. The monarch has enough confidence in him to set a lonely house apart for the two, and there they live for a number of years, undisturbed by the noise of the world. However, the teacher never pronounces a word, nor does the prince ask questions. In the end, of course, a great and very important lesson is imparted. This story is unknown in the rest of Europe but occurs in the Egyptian redaction of the *Nights* and in a modern Egyptian folk-tale. It is virtually certain that this tale owes its diffusion to the mediaeval clerks who first brought it from the Orient to France and from there carried it to Iceland. As a matter of fact, the Icelandic redactor of the book containing it is known to have been a student at the Sorbonne.<sup>26</sup>

The idea of putting a number of stories in a 'frame', no doubt to create a unity that would otherwise be lacking and to heighten the interest of hearer or reader, is unquestionably Indian. The best example is not the *Panchatantra*, where the device is decidedly overdone, one story being boxed into another which is again boxed into a third, and so forth, a procedure which makes it extremely difficult for the reader to follow the general outline, whilst for a hearer it would be a sheer impossibility. This compilation is thereby sufficiently shown to be late in time, though its materials may of course be, and no doubt are, very old indeed. The *Vetalapanchavinçati* and the *Tales of a Throne* are vastly simpler in structure and therefore, in this point at least, more primitive than the *Panchatantra* even in its oldest ascertainable form. The *Book of Sindibad*, the *Tuti-Nameh*, and the *Forty Vazirs* hark back to the same Indian models, and so does, in the last analysis, the huge compilation, composed of the most incongruous elements, that goes under the name of *Arabian Nights*. In the West the *Disciplina clericalis* no doubt followed an Arabic model, but the didactic character of the frame was in its turn imitated in the rest of Europe, the Spanish work of Juan Manuel already quoted being only one of its numerous derivatives. The simple device of inserting a shorter tale or episode in a novel or an epic by putting it in the mouth of one of the characters, is of course far older and goes back to the Ionian narrative art and to

Homer. Nor is there any necessity for supposing Oriental models for Boccaccio's frame, simple and natural as it is. But it was the West and Celtic Europe that improved upon the Oriental 'frame' by the device, simple enough and yet unknown elsewhere, of putting the adventures told in the various tales in an even closer relationship to the frame by revealing at the end that the chief hero of the frame (or one of them) is identical with the leading character of some or all the adventures reported in the tales. This improvement is unknown in the Orient, and the only parallel that might be adduced is the purely mechanical identification of the speaker with the hero of the tale he has just told as found in the Indian *Jatakam*. This collection, as goes without saying, was absolutely unknown in Mediaeval Europe, and the device under discussion is therefore the work of the European story-tellers who first utilized it, that is, the Irish. An illustration will help the reader to a full understanding of this improvement.

An old thief who is repenting of his trade and mending his ways, disadvises his three sons from following his former career. Thinking no doubt that the old man is in his dotage, the sons, far from listening to him, set out to steal the state horse of a queen and are captured. The father, who goes to ransom them, is told by the queen to relate his most fearful adventures. This he does, telling among other things how at the risk of his life he once freed a woman and her child from a group of monsters. In the end the queen reveals herself as having been that very woman, and of course she lets his sons go free.

This tale from Campbell's collection of West Highland stories is undoubtedly derived from the mediaeval *Dolopathos*, yet it is a noteworthy fact that in that version nothing whatever is said about the identity of the queen with the persecuted woman freed by the robber. This little touch is then doubtless an addition of the Celtic story-teller.<sup>27</sup>

The rest of Europe was very slow in following up this improvement; as a matter of fact, one has to wait until the nineteenth century with the publication of W. Hauff's fairy tales, to see this scheme carried into effect.

Irish prose narrative is responsible for a whole type of Icelandic literature: the so-called *útilegumannasögur*, i.e. sagas of outlaws.<sup>28</sup> A common tale-type runs thus. The daughter of an Icelandic farmer disappears without leaving traces. Some time later the same farmer's flock of sheep disappears as mysteriously. The farmer goes in search of his animals, is surprised by a magic mist, and when it lifts finds himself in a valley of rare beauty the like of which he has never beheld. There he finds his

sheep and his daughter, the latter as the wife of an outlaw who had taken refuge in this solitude, the valley being inhabited by outlaws only, who here lead the peaceful life of Icelandic farmers. So deep rooted was the belief in valleys of this sort that as late as the eighteenth century expeditions were sent out for their discovery. Yet the facts presented are as unreal as they can possibly be. There are no such valleys in that lonely and ice-bound isle, and the episode of the magic mist and other incidents indicate that those outlaws are really superhuman and ought to have put the Icelanders on their guard. As a matter of fact, those valleys are but dim reflections of the *tir-na-nogue*, the Land of Youth so prominent in the Irish sagas; the magic mist is the well-known druidical mist no less common in Irish narrative art, and the outlaws are only Icelandic *avatars* of the Irish fairies.

Icelandic literature and folk-lore are crammed with motives of undoubted Celtic, that is Irish, origin. There is the well-known tale so charmingly told by the Wife of Bath: the ugly hag who turns into a most beautiful woman upon the performance of a certain ceremony, not always of a nature approved of by Puritans.<sup>29</sup> It is as current in Iceland as it is on the Continent and in England, or rather was, in mediaeval times. There is the story of the Hag of Slaughter, resuscitating the fallen warriors of her own party, thus compelling the enemy, already tired out and wellnigh exhausted, to continue the murderous battle on the following day and again on the following, until her trick is discovered by a new-comer who, suspecting some witchery of the kind, watches the battlefield at night and slays the hag.<sup>30</sup> There is the final scene of a long epic struggle: the hero, Grettir the Strong, has resisted all attacks made on him; then his enemies have recourse to witchcraft and suborn an old sorceress to bring on his ruin by evil spells. It was taken, if not from the last episode, at least from one of the last, of the Irish saga of Dermot and Grania; Finn's old nurse was the prototype for the nurse of Thorbjörn Angle, Grettir's deadly foe.<sup>31</sup> There is the tale of the bewitched husband who slays his wives, until the last of these receives a revelation in a dream, from one of her unfortunate predecessors, as to how to save herself. That story, in modified form and with a tragic ending, is the centre-piece of the Breton legend of Kamorre: it also forms part of an Icelandic *útilegu-mannasaga*.<sup>32</sup> The gruesome tale of the weaving witches announcing the disaster of Clontarf is fairly unique in Norse literature; it is a commonplace in Irish legend.<sup>33</sup> A whole book might be written on the indebtedness of Icelandic fiction to the literature of Mediaeval Ireland. There is no danger that such a

book should be forthcoming soon : pursuits of this sort do not square with the ideal of progressive Americanization which has at the present moment taken hold of Western Europe after the greatest folly in human history.

Ireland was, however, not the only country to furnish the Scandinavian North with master-tales. Throughout the Middle Ages there existed a connexion between Scandinavia and the countries of the Near East through Byzantium. Thus the ancient story of the Thessalian Cyanippus who neglects his wife for the pleasure of the chase, so delightfully told by Parthenius, turns up in Mediaeval Norway in an episode of the *Þiðreks Saga*, whilst no Latin medium has been discovered to this day.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the Norse *Friðþjófs Saga*, with its strange motives of the old king ceding his wife to a friend and the sex taboo of Balder's temple, is no native of Northern Europe at all but is derived directly from the Semitic East, as has been convincingly shown by Dr. Gould in a recent study.<sup>35</sup>

Nor is it to be supposed that the Scandinavians only took and never gave. The Celtic Tristan story, having grown out of the Irish saga of Dermot and Grania,<sup>36</sup> has attained its mediaeval form only by contamination with the Norse Sigurd legend. Here is a brief outline of the situation obtaining in the three stories. In *Dermot and Grania* the heroine, overcome by the power of her companion's 'love-spots', causes herself to be abducted by him, hence the deadly feud between her husband Finn and her lover Dermot. In the Norse Sigurd legend the hero, though bound to one woman, is overcome by a magic drink and contracts another union, hence the feud of the two queens, ending in the hero's death. In the Tristan legend the Irish 'love spot' has been replaced by the Norse potion which has for effect, not forgetfulness as in the Norse original, but the opposite, an unconquerable passion, as in the Irish tale. More, in *Dermot and Grania* there can be no question of adultery in the logical sense of the word, if one grants the woman the right to dissolve a union at will and to contract another one, that is, the simple right which the husband has or used to have in Jewish and Islamic society. Nor is there mention of adultery in the Norse Sigurd story : Brunhild expressly tells Sigurd that she does not care for two men in one hall. By comparison the Tristan story reads like a supplement of the Sigurd Legend : Isolt *has* two men in one hall. One gains the impression that the British author (to use the most general term) deliberately set to work to exploit a situation hinted at in the Norse lay.

Irish-Scandinavian influences combined and Scandinavian

influences singly are clearly noticeable on the Continent. Here are only a few examples. In an early twelfth-century French epic poem, preserved only in fragments, we witness a genuine Norman invasion in the region called Pontieu, in Northern France. The leaders are true to type, an old sea-wolf, called Gormond, a fairly common Norse name of the period, and his son-in-law, a Frenchman called Isembard, with a good Teutonic name, as we see, who has turned renegade, having abandoned the Christian religion and embraced the faith of Othin. The battle which ensues is historically well attested. An attempted identification of the Norse leader has led only into chronological difficulties<sup>37</sup>; and when we come to an identification of the renegade or *margarit*, as he is called in Byzantine fashion, we are completely at sea, for no French noble is known to have abandoned the faith of his fathers to embrace Teutonic paganism, to say nothing of his going to Scandinavia there to marry a Norwegian princess. On the other hand, a few points of some importance, it would seem, have been completely neglected in this connexion. They are, first, that renegades of this type, though rare in France, were extremely common in Ireland, for not only did converted Scandinavians quite often go back to their old faith (witness the viking Broder, the slayer of King Brian Boru), but even native Irishmen turned pagans, acting no doubt on the maxim that the god of the victors is the stronger and the stronger god the better. In the second place, to turn Scandinavian, in those days, one did not have to go to Norway; Dublin and York sufficed completely and were nearer at hand. In the third place, there was many a Scandinavian king who owned not a square foot of ground in Norway but had a kingdom at Waterford, at Limerick, or in Dublin. Finally, the French text is careful to mention *Irois*, i.e., probably, Irish Scandinavians, among the troops marshalled by Gormond and his son-in-law. To these purely objective deductions let us add a more subjective one. The epic in question distinguishes itself by a softness in tone completely absent in the *chansons de geste* of the period. The renegade still loves his native soil and secretly hopes for the victory of the French king; he has renounced God the Father, but he refuses to renounce the Virgin. Such tones are essentially Irish, and he who found them was probably an Irish monk connected with the French abbey of St. Riquier near Saucourt, where the battle was fought. That abbey, as M. Bédier has shown, had a direct interest in keeping alive the memories of the battle. Whether in the eleventh century any memory lingered in the district concerning it, M. Bédier rightly doubts. The names of the protagonists any chronicle could furnish, and no doubt did

furnish. But the touching story of the *margarit* and the emotions that tore his heart while his hand wielded the sword, did not have its root in France; it is a migratory legend which originated in the Ireland of the Viking period. It belongs, then, to the numerous class of Viking legends which arose in the British Isles, composed as they are of Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian and Celtic elements, legends like the *Tristan*, already discussed, the Havelock saga, the Horn saga, the Hamlet legend, and the famous tale of Ragnar Lodbrok and his sons.<sup>38</sup>

However, the Scandinavian countries loomed large enough in the Middle Ages to exert a direct action on the folk-lore of the Continent and without the Irish-English medium noticeable in the preceding group of tales. A few illustrations will prove helpful. There is a story telling of a bogle that haunts a mill, much to the miller's annoyance. The bogle is finally pretty badly treated by a bear left there by a wandering juggler and thereupon forsakes the mill. Some time later he comes back and inquires from the miller whether the 'big brown cat' is still alive. The miller is careful to inform him that it is and has seven little ones. At which news the bogle disappears for good and all. The tale is presumed to have originated in Scandinavia, whence it was carried to Central Europe about 1060 on the occasion of the Ice-lander Andun's visit to Denmark with a polar bear, a present given to the Danish king Svein by Harald Hardrade. Later the story was carried to various points of the Continent, and is now found in many parts of Europe in Teutonic, Slavonic, and Romance variants.<sup>39</sup>

Mention has already been made of the story of the *Sparrows of Cirencester*, spread by the Scandinavians over Western and Northern Europe, from England to Russia. Another stratagem attributed to the Normans and doubtless propagated by them in their own interest is the tale of the captain who feigns death, whilst his men request and obtain for him burial in the cathedral church of the besieged city. When the gates are thrown open, the 'dead' man comes to life, and his band is not long in seizing the fortress and massacring its inhabitants. The story is localized by the Norman-French historians at Luna, a Tuscan city wiped out by the vikings, whilst Saxo Grammaticus tells it on the occasion of a Danish expedition into the Baltic provinces. Norman by diffusion, if not by origin (a similar tale occurs in the Orient), is the jolly episode of the prince who dazzles the inhabitants of a foreign city by his luxury; he will have his horses shod with silver horseshoes. The story is told of several Norman princes, of Robert, the eldest son of William the Con-



queror, for example, but also of the Norwegian king Sigurd the Crusader.<sup>40</sup>

In a good number of the migratory legends considered thus far one can distinguish the class of people active in the work of propagation. The Irish scholar living in exile, the Norman soldier anxious to 'bluff', the Scandinavian or Anglo-Saxon epic poet searching for new material, the goliard, the returning crusader, the juggler, and the cleric: the activity of all these classes is clearly discernible in the various tales, and one cannot imagine the tale of the bogle and the bear being told by a scholar any more than that of Tannhäuser and Pope Urban IV by a priest of the Church, unless he were an excommunicated one who had joined the ranks of the *vagantes*. But it is precisely the rôle of the clergy which of necessity comes in for what is probably the largest share in the diffusion of migratory tales. This important fact need cause no surprise, seeing that the mediaeval clergy was the only literary class and hence the only one to which the written tradition was no less accessible than the oral. That as a class the clergy should work primarily for the Church is natural enough, but folk-lore does not lose its character by being put down in more or less correct ecclesiastical Latin and attached to the saints of the Church.

One of the most curious of these saints is Saint Eustachius, or Placidus, as he was called in private life. An old account related the banal fact that he and his family, some time during the reign of Trajan, had suffered martyrdom in the Roman arena. How far this is true we do not know; but it is of little importance since in that form, the nucleus of the story, Eustachius-Placidus is merely a name and as good as any other, the essential fact which cannot be denied being the martyrdom of a considerable number of people of the same religious tenets and the same unwillingness to compromise. This threadbare tale was rightly considered insufficient by some enterprising cleric, who thereupon decided to make it more interesting by adding more matter. To obtain this, he fused an Indian tale of Buddhistic colouring, if not of Buddhist origin, telling of the trials of a pacifist king, his wife and his family of twins, with the Mediterranean Clement Romance, which had developed out of a Greek novel likewise constructed on a Dioscuric basis. The martyrdom required that the hero should be a private citizen; the wars which drove the Indian king from his throne suggested that he should be a general. In this form the legend served to replace an unknown pagan Dioscuric cult. Later, when that purpose was fulfilled, the Church did whatever it could to obliterate the traces of Dioscurism occurring

in the tale, without success. The ancient twin-tale of Indian provenance continued to live, of course, a life far more humble than that of its ecclesiastical avatar, only to come to the surface again in the Middle Ages, assuming literary form in a number of Old French, Middle English and Middle High German compositions, *with* the twin features the Church legend had partly lost. I have been able here to sketch only very briefly the history of that story, fascinating in the extreme, since it extends over a period of probably more than three thousand years and migrated over an area reaching from Celebes to Spain.<sup>41</sup>

Quite as interesting, though less ambitious, is the story of the warrior saints Amicus and Amelius. Their origin, like that of Placidus and his family, is anything but Christian. They were a pair of Celtic Dioskouroi who in antiquity were identified with the Boreades, slain, as is well known, by Herakles when encountered by him as they were returning from the funeral games of Pelias. In the Middle Ages, Amicus and Amelius were canonized and became warrior-saints, still worshipped in the same region, not far from Mortara in Lombardy. Even the story of their slaughter remained unaltered, though Herakles was replaced by Ogier of Denmark, the popular figure of the Carolingian legendary cycle. Lying close to the great pilgrim-road which led from France into Italy, the sanctuary and its heroes attracted the attention of the French *jongleurs*, who popularized the legend beyond its homeland, and it finally became known from one end of Europe to the other.<sup>42</sup>

Of purely ecclesiastical origin, too, is the touching story of Pope Gregory who prayed for the soul of the Emperor Trajan. The legend, or rather this particular part of it, was known in the Near East in pre-Islamic times; and the hero who by his prayers induces the soul of a man long since dead and suffering in Hell to come back into the body, to live life over again, though a more edifying one to be sure, to receive baptism, to die again and to be saved, is Christ himself. True enough, the Christian text is lost, but the Mohammedan version we know leaves no doubt whatever about its former existence. There can be no uncertainty that priests carried it from the Orient to the Occident in the first place and that it was finally linked up, again by priests, with the name of the famous pope.<sup>43</sup>

The legend of the *bocca della verità*, as it may be called, is semi-learned, if not downright clerical. It centres in a certain monument representing a wild animal with gaping mouth. Any person taking an oath will put his hand in the mouth of the statue, and if the oath is false the mouth is believed to close and to bite

off the miscreant's hand. The tale usually goes on to narrate how a woman's wiles got the better of the magic statue, which thereupon in great disgust ceased to function. In Europe the story is not connected with any monument which can even remotely be supposed to have been responsible for its origin. In Asia the tale is linked with the emperor Julian the Apostate and a statue of Mercury which punished him in precisely that fashion. In Asia, too, though not in Asia exclusively, are found statuettes of carnivorous animals holding in their gaping mouths human limbs, that is, hands or legs. The story may therefore be considered to have originated in such a statue, to have become connected with the emperor Julian, and then to have migrated to Italy, no doubt with the co-operation of the clergy. A learned or semi-learned tradition, it then spread among the people and ended up by being the story as we know it from more than a dozen variants, mostly hailing from Italy.<sup>44</sup>

Of a similar type are the many stories about talismans, so common in the Middle Ages. A talisman, in this restricted and essentially mediaeval sense, is simply a statue or picture with which is bound up the fate of a community, city or empire. Thus the Palladium of Troy is a talisman in that sense; once it was taken by the enemy, the city was doomed. The notion itself is not Hellenic, however, but typically Asiatic. Hence it was that when the Arabs had seized half of the Mediterranean shores the concept of magic statues as palladia or talismans spread like wild-fire. Here are only a few of the most characteristic migratory legends sprung from that root. When the Visigoth kingdom in Spain had fallen before the onslaught of the Arabs and in consequence of its own rottenness, the last king, the unfortunate Rodrick, was fabled to have violated an ancient tower at Toledo, the talisman of the Gothic kingdom. He had penetrated into the building and opened a certain chest. In it he had found a picture representing the Moors, or an inscription pointing out the catastrophe to come, or both. The same tale is found in China, where it is told of the tyrant Tsin-Schî-Huang, said to have broken into the tomb of Confucius and met with much the same prophecy. The story is of quite a venerable age, having been connected, in antiquity, with a Babylonian temple, called Belus' Tower and the name of the Persian King Xerxes.<sup>45</sup> Nay, it lived on in Mesopotamia down to early mediaeval times, since in the Persian chronicles and Firdusi's *Book of Kings* it is related of the Sasanid monarch Hormuzd IV and a secret chest transmitted to him by his father.<sup>46</sup>

In Constantinople itself, as the memories of the golden past

began to fade and Orientalism waxed strong, the old statues, most of them no longer understood, acquired the reputation of talismans. Some of these were believed not only to be connected with the fate of the Empire in a general way but with certain events which had befallen the latter or were still to befall it. Thus a certain relief representing the scaling of a wall from the ships below was, after 1204, interpreted as having foreshadowed, or maybe brought on, the Frankish invasion. Another statue was destroyed by the mob because its gesture was suspected to be one of beckoning the Western barbarians to come on.<sup>47</sup> A Byzantine historian took a statue representing the deadly struggle between a hippopotamus and a crocodile as a *symbol* of the internecine struggle of the Frankish crusaders. What to the man of letters appeared as a symbol may well have been more to the populace at large. At all events, an idea of this type is no doubt at the base of the famous fight between the white and the red dragon as described by Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>48</sup> The snake-fight itself is a well-known Near Eastern motive, occurring in about a dozen different variants, some of which go back to pre-Islamic times. This much is certain: the legend in question is neither Celtic nor Teutonic but a migratory legend imported from Asia.

The concept of the Talisman is also behind the numerous legends of the magician Vergil. To drive off the flies, he constructed a brazen fly, just as according to *Exodus* Moses, to stay the snake plague, had made a brazen serpent. To give speedy warning of a hostile invasion, he constructed a tower with statues or bells, each statue or bell representing a definite nation or tribe. Vergil without any shadow of doubt is a creature of Italian folklore—folk-lore in its widest sense, because learned, semi-learned and genuine popular currents flow here side by side and more than once intermingle—but the stories which have become attached to his name are vastly older and as un-Italian as can be. They belong, with very few exceptions, to what Oswald Spengler calls the 'magic soul'; although they are far older even than Spengler's 'magic' cycle of civilization. But their home, at all events, is the Near East, and it is significant that before becoming attached to Vergil quite a number of these stories were told of Hippokrates or Daidalos—that is, of Grecian characters.

Moreover, Vergil's magic fly, designed to drive off all flies, forcibly reminds one not only of the brazen serpent of Moses (*Num.* xxi. 9) but also of the Carthaginian custom of burying underneath the houses metal images of certain noxious animals, especi-

ally scorpions, designed either to protect the inhabitants from such vermin or to put these animals themselves to a speedy rout. In Constantinople, three serpents twisted into a tripod of bronze (a well-known sculptural motive), were interpreted in no other way, and when the tripod was taken away by Mohammed II the snakes were fabled to have reappeared in the city.

Under the same heading, that of migratory legends of learned and semi-learned origin, must be classed the many stories which succeeded in becoming incrustated as it were in the structure of a great missionary religion. One of the best known of these is of course the myth of Lucifer's Fall. The pre-exilic Jews were ignorant of it, and the very idea of the Evil One is known to have originated with the Semitized Persians who were settled in or near Mesopotamia, close neighbours of the transplanted Jews. The name of Lucifer, the morning star, slipped in as a consequence of a rabbinical misinterpretation of an *Isaiah* passage. The course run by the legend, through Judaism, Christianity, Islam and various sects which cannot be properly said to belong to any one of the three is a matter of common knowledge, and no reader of Milton will deny that the legend is one of the most marvellous, though also one of the most fateful, that were ever conceived by the human brain.

What is fair to the monotheistic religions is equally so to Buddhism, and it is well to mention in passing a genuine migratory legend of rare literary beauty which would, so far as we may judge, never have reached such vast numbers of human beings had it not first been told of the founder of that most humane of all religions. I refer, of course, to the touching story of the young prince who, on leaving his royal splendour, for the first time in his life comes into contact with human misery and death. That story is of such beauty and power that neither Christianity nor Islam have scrupled to take it over, attributing it, of course, to personages of the rank of their own saints.

The fundamental theme, that of the vanity of all earthly things, no doubt the highest philosophical insight man is capable of, although we may not at all adopt the Buddhist solution, was used in many variants by the ancient Indians after their great civilization had run its course, as it had toward Buddha's time. Yet the theme is always clearly discernible. Thus one variant relates how the prince tires of all his splendour, how even in the beauty of the music girls sent to entertain him he sees only human nature, doomed to decay, decrepit old age and a speedy death. Not all of the variants are known in the West at the time of this writing; yet there must have been many more. When reading,

some time ago, the old Sasanid chronicle of Tabarî, I ran across the following tale.<sup>49</sup>

The Arab prince Nu'mân, after having conquered a good many of his neighbours and invaded even the Roman province of Syria, one morning stepped to the window of his royal apartment, and he beheld lying before him an orchard in all the beauty of the Mesopotamian spring. And he rejoiced in the sight and said to his vazîr, 'Hast thou ever seen anything like it?' The vazîr replied, 'No, if only it were enduring!'—'What then is enduring?' was the monarch's retort.—'Only what is with God in heaven, and thou canst gain it only by renouncing this world.' And Nu'mân laid down the government that same day, took off his royal garments, to put on rags in their stead, left his palace, and went into the wide world, as a poor and lonely pilgrim, never again to appear.

It is a variant of the old theme of Prince Gautama who on first issuing from his royal palace beholds sickness, misery, and death, and who then tires of this life, a theme carried to Persia by Buddhist propagandists and then ascribed to that brilliant and chivalrous Arab prince, no doubt for the same reason that Jewish writers will ascribe to Alexander the Great his journey to Paradise, where he is shown how the human eye covets the universe but is covered with a little handful of dust.

Nor was Persia open to Buddhist influences only. In an ancient Pehlevi work we find the following maxim<sup>50</sup>:

When you want to sit down on a seat at a wedding banquet, do not choose a seat high up, lest they pull you away from that seat and put you on a seat farther down.

The maxim and the imagery are the same as those of a New Testamental parable recounted by Luke. Whether the old Persian writer was familiar with the gospels is highly doubtful. What is more likely is that both the Pehlevi text and the parable of Luke go back to a common original current in the lands where Aramaic was spoken.

Above all, the influence of the extremely rich Jewish narrative literature cannot be over-estimated in its influence both on Christianity and Islam. One of the best examples which can be quoted in this connexion is the famous parable of the Angel and the Hermit, made immortal by Voltaire.

A pious hermit conceives serious doubts on the question whether everything is really for the best in the best of all possible worlds, as his faith in an all-good and all-wise deity requires him to believe. To solve the matter for him, an angel takes him on a journey and does, in his

presence, a number of seemingly irrational things. The explanation finally given in the Jewish archetype briefly amounts to this, that without the angel's action things would have gone even worse. Man's understanding is simply not great enough to judge correctly the chain of cause and effect.

Now it is interesting to note that both Christianity and Islam carried into the story certain transcendental notions which did not occur to the Jewish author; and it is equally significant that under the hands of the eighteenth-century deists, such as Parnell and Voltaire, the story again sloughed off these transcendental elements. The episode in Voltaire's *Zadig*, as a matter of fact, clearly ends with a note of doubt which, it is needless to say, rather adds to the quiet and humane beauty of the ancient narrative.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to separate, in the discussion of European and Asiatic migratory legends, the classical from the ecclesiastical tradition. For both were propagated through learned media, as a rule by ecclesiastics or by people with ecclesiastical training or leanings. This important factor is not always understood in Protestant countries, but it is an undisputed fact from the time when the new religion began to attract good minds from among the Graeco-Roman world into its own ranks. Whatever classical lore is found, in Northern France, the British Isles, Germany, and Scandinavia including Iceland, was carried thither from classical soil by the priests of the Roman Church. Once acclimatized, the classical material was capable of being transformed in various ways, of becoming, in other words, a genuine part of Western and Northern European folk-lore.<sup>51</sup> Many of the Vergil stories referred to above might be quoted under this head, but the material is really so great that one may speak of an *embarras de richesse*.

An ancient Greek legend speaks of the master-builder Daidalos and his jealousy, a quality attributed to intellectuals all over the known world and based, no doubt, upon correct observation. This jealousy led him to slay his own nephew, the son of his sister. In Mediaeval Greece we find the same story, ascribed, now, to the physician Hippocrates. In this form the tale migrated to Western Europe, in or before the age of the crusades. It became incorporated in the Western branch of the *Book of Sindibad*, the romance of the *Seven Sages of Rome*,<sup>52</sup> as it is called, but it also penetrated into Ireland, where it was attributed to the leech Dian-Cecht, guilty of precisely the same crime.

In Aristophanes' *Clouds*, Socrates is drawn up in a basket and remains hanging half-way, dangling in the air. In Mediaeval

Europe the same story is told, of the master-magician Vergil, of course, who is fabled to have been tricked in this fashion by a fair one. The tale enjoyed great popularity and has been transmitted in a large number of variants.

The Ancient Greek legend of Eriphyle, one of the central figures of the ancient epic of the *Alkmaionis*, lingered on in Syria, and in Islamic times was fused with the Biblical story of Balaam, the latter prophet being induced to curse the Israelites by his wife, who had been bribed by the king of Balka, the bitter enemy of the Jews.<sup>53</sup>

The Oedipus legend underwent a curious transformation in the Occident. The figure of the Sphinx being no longer understood, the hero was converted into a general who frees his mother's city from a besieging host and then is offered her hand in reward.

The classical story of Meleager, whose life, by a decree of the Moirai, is bound up with a fire-brand, was in the same manner carried north to Mediaeval Iceland, where the Hellenic Moirai were of course replaced by the Scandinavian Norns, whilst the hero was called Nornagest. The legend could without difficulty become acclimatized in Teutonic countries because the fundamental idea, the comparison of life with a flame, appears to belong to the oldest fund of Teutonic folk-lore. At the same time it is worth noting that whilst in the Greek tale the motive is simply used to narrate the terrible struggle in the heart of the hero's mother and his own premature death, the Scandinavians allowed the hero to reach a respectable old age, three times as long as the life of ordinary men, in order to make him recount with much satisfaction the many strange things he has seen and heard and his encounter with some of the most famous heroes of olden times. It might be mentioned in passing that this last bit of fiction is a favourite motive in narrative art. The Greeks were perfectly familiar with it; witness the garrulous old hero Nestor. It had probably a good deal to do with the conferring upon the Norwegian Starkaðr a similar longevity, and when in Irish saga Saint Patrick resuscitates an old bard of the Finn cycle, the purpose of this at first sight strange invention is equally obvious.

The curious tale of King Midas and his barber, known to be of Phrygian origin, became popular in Celtic Britain and Ireland, thanks to a version of the story found in Ovid and Servius' Vergil commentary. But it migrated equally far, if not farther, in an Eastern direction and is now current over an extremely large territory.

The same fate was shared, in Western Europe at least, by the episode of the white and the black sail occurring in the classical



Theseus legend. This story, again through the medium of Servius' commentary, was so popular in the West that in the Tristan legend it came to replace the old ending of that tragic story, the slaying of the lover by the husband with the help of a poisonous lance or spear, an ending which may be considered as proved, thanks to the close parallel of the Irish story of *Dermat and Grania*.

It would be methodologically wrong, however, to assume that the migration of classical stories to Northern Europe cannot have taken place before the definite establishment of Christianity in the West. A number of examples, not very many, it is true, proves the opposite. Thus the Teutonic figure of the smith Wayland is a curious combination of the classical Daedalus and Vulcan, whilst the forms of his name in the various Teutonic dialects are altogether obscure and defy phonetic laws. If the legend were Christian and classico-mediaeval, it would have remained closer to the prototype. There can therefore be little doubt that the tradition was only semi-learned, very probably a trade legend carried north by primitive craftsmen, somewhat similar to the wandering tinkers of more recent periods.

The same may be said of the Norse Loki legends. That Loki owes something to the Christian Lucifer is practically certain, but he owes infinitely more to the classical Prometheus. This fusion is unthinkable within the body of orthodox Christianity; it is highly probable as the work of gnostic sects living on the Hellenic-Iranian border and fusing classical with Zoroastrian elements.

Much the same state of facts obtains for the Norse Ragnarök and Balder legends. The former, centring in the idea of a general destruction of the universe by conflagration, no doubt antedates the Christian era. The doctrine was current in the Semitic and Zoroastrian religions from which Christianity was neither the first nor the only creed to borrow it: Stoicism had done so previously.

The Norse Balder legend has been shown to be a compound of legends connected with the Near Eastern mystery cults, so popular during the first centuries of our era.<sup>54</sup>

Migrations such as these may already be considered as pre-historic, especially if it is borne in mind that for Northern Europe history begins late. That human intercourse was intense enough, in prehistoric times, to favour the diffusion of legends admits of no doubt. The Andromeda legend mentioned above is a good case in point; so is the tale of the *Poison Damsel*, which must have reached Crete from India in Minoan times.<sup>55</sup> So is the famous Roman legend of Curtius, the knight who leaps into the

yawning chasm to save his native town, a story which has its pendant in Asia Minor and was in all probability carried to Italy by the Etruscans.<sup>56</sup> So is the Roman legend of Tarpeia, a derivative of a certain Hellenic cycle of stories which, with its central motive of the *External Soul*, points to the coast of Gaza as the site of its origin. It is there, at all events, that the tale has come down in its most popular, though also probably most savage, form.<sup>57</sup>

The best illustration, however, that can be quoted in this connexion is the famous Teiresias biography as reported by Hesiod and discussed above.

It is well, before bringing this chapter to a close, to warn the reader of two important facts, lest he gain the quite erroneous impression that everything in this interesting field of oral folklore is well known and well ascertained and that there are no hidden corners badly in need of being cleared up. In the first place, it must not be supposed that the exact history of all or even of most migratory legends is known at the date of this writing. The ominous presence of a group of prehistoric legends just passed in review sufficiently indicates that such is not the case and presumably never will be. In the second place, the distinction between local and migratory legends, though here drawn for purely practical reasons, is by no means as well marked as the reader might possibly be led to suppose. A few words on both these points will therefore be helpful.

Among the migratory legends clearly still in need of investigation is the group of stories as a rule connected with the name of some 'magician', Dr. Faust for example. To consider all or even most of these stories as grown out of some historical fact would be quite beside the point, for precisely the same tale types were attached, long before the age of Faust and the Protestant Reformation, to the Icelandic magicians Perus or Saemundr, or even to a pope, Sylvester II. To enumerate a few, we find there the devil's pact, a number of pranks based upon hypnotization (such as converting a bundle of hay into a horse or giving the impression that a water-course is flowing where there is in reality dry ground, a story told already of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba), and fakir's tricks (such as making a plant grow up in no time). One of the most curious, however, is the tale of how the magician, condemned to be hanged, exchanges shapes with the hangman, so that the latter is hanged and the deceived spectators and (we may presume) the judge discover the trick when it is too late. The story is curious, I say, because in certain Gnostic writings the Founder of Christianity is said to have played

precisely the same trick on Simon of Cyrene. By what channels such stories migrated we cannot be sure of knowing. Since, however, in the Middle Ages there flourished guilds addicted to white magic, often identical with certain heretical sects, one can dimly discern their diffusion from one end of Europe to the other.<sup>58</sup>

If a distinction has been drawn between local and migratory legend, it must not be supposed that for this reason the latter is incapable of becoming localized, attached as it were to definite places and even to definite personages. Precisely the opposite is true, as is shown by more than one of the many examples quoted in this chapter. Here I give only two additional ones.

A fable of Phaedrus, the freedman of Tiberius, reports the following incidents<sup>59</sup>:

Two rivals, one of them rich and unprepossessing, the other poor and handsome, woo the same fair one. Naturally, only the former is accepted by the prospective father-in-law. A donkey is hired for the bride, and by accident it so happens that the animal is the property of the unsuccessful suitor. The wedding procession starts on its way. Venus, taking pity on the lovers, disperses the *cortège* by a sudden storm. The frightened donkey with the bride runs to his accustomed lodging where its master is sitting over his cups to drown his sorrow. Whilst the real bridegroom promises handsome rewards to any one who would find and recover his lost bride, his lucky rival

dulces perficit  
Aequalitatis inter plausus nuptias.

This story was picked up by a mediaeval French *clerc*, Huon le Roi, with considerably more talent than Phaedrus, and the result was that the delightful story was transposed into a *courtois* environment. The two rivals are uncle and nephew; the former gets the better of the latter by a horrible treason of which nothing is said in the ancient story, and the peaceful donkey has been metamorphosed into a palfrey.<sup>60</sup>

In this form the tale migrated from France to Germany, carried thither, no doubt, by the mediaeval minstrels, and as a result it came to be localized at a castle in the Rhine country.<sup>61</sup>

The attachment of a migratory legend to a definite name is often the result of mere word play. For example, the story of the cranes of Ibykos, a typical migratory legend found all over the Old World, had originally nothing to do with the ancient Greek poet. The connexion was the consequence of an etymological equation of the name *Ἰβυκος* = *ἰβυκες* = 'cranes'.

Lastly, it may be well to caution the reader in regard to the

question, not always easy to decide, whether a given story may be properly classed as a migratory legend, or whether polygenesis, i.e. independent growth out of a common basis, is not after all the more probable theory. Even a combination of the two is thinkable. Here only one example. Mention has been made above of the *Wife of Bath's Tale* with its episode of a metamorphosis of an ugly old hag into a rare beauty, no doubt a Celtic story. Yet the European Middle Ages were familiar also with precisely the opposite motive, the fair one all of a sudden turning out, much to the dismay of her admirer, a ghastly crone of horrible appearance. The *locus classicus* is a ballad dealing with the adventures of Thomas of Erceldoune, where we are told :

Thomas stood up in that stead  
And beheld the lady gay :  
Her hair it hung over her head,  
Her eyes seemed out, they were so gray.

And all her clothing was awry  
That he before saw in that stead ;  
Her one shank black, the other gray  
And all her body like the lead.

Since Giraldus Cambrensis knows of a similar unpleasant experience, supposed to have been that of a Welshman named Meilerius, one might be tempted to regard this narrative as a typically Celtic story. Since, furthermore, there exists a Middle High German poem by Konrad von Würzburg, one might consider the tale as an exact parallel to the legend of Tannhäuser and the Mountain of Venus. Yet such a conclusion would be certainly erroneous ; for the same story is told of the Teutonic forest women both in Central Europe and in Sweden, and it is found even in the Near East, in Persia and in India. We are therefore dealing, in all probability, not at all with a migratory legend but with independent growths out of a common basis, the well-known double aspect of all Spirits of the Wild. Nor can the so-called fairy-mistress theme be in any way considered as typically or exclusively Celtic. On the contrary, it is of necessity found wherever female Spirits of the Wild are believed in, which means, the larger part of the Old World and considerable territory in the New. Still less store can be laid by the peculiarly moralizing, edifying tone which the old tale will assume in different countries. For it stands to reason that wherever some ascetic religion or philosophy was in vogue the clerics were not slow in identifying the fairy-mistress with *Frau Welt*, that is, in mediaeval parlance, with the Devil in person.<sup>62</sup>

The migratory legend, it may be said after this long survey, appears to be about the most fascinating part of a fascinating subject. Unlike the fairy tale, the merry tale, and the animal tale, it cannot be said to have a common human basis, that is, a basis broad enough to recommend itself to all nations and all creeds indiscriminately. After all, the marvellous element of the fairy tale may enchant and does enchant all men, no matter of what colour their skin happens to be, and the well-known European types have successfully penetrated among the North American Indians. The merry tale again, with its broad humour which presupposes as a rule nothing but the most elementary human relationships, wins friends everywhere, and the best friends, strange to say, among people of a puritanical turn of mind. The animal tale in its simplest forms is found in every continent, and the coloured folk did not wait for the white man's coming to invent it. Hence an exchange of such stories is possible and presents no essential difficulties; the only condition is that the animal forms in question be known. How different is it, at first sight, with migratory legends! They arise in one place, growing out of a very definite condition, practice, or belief, often forming part of a very definite and highly orthodox religious system, and yet they are accepted elsewhere, sometimes eagerly accepted, sometimes incorporated into a different religious system. They must, so it seems, fulfil just one condition, and that is, they must be good stories, interesting, logically constructed, to the point and, quite important this, provided with a certain didactic element, a certain lesson to convey, however homely that may be. The legends passed in review, from the mysterious laugh of the Brahman boy to the treachery of Delilah and her descendant, the fair Tarpeia, and to the prototype of the Teiresias story, will amply prove this point, without my having to assume the position of the mediaeval preacher of *exempla*, who, after having related the story, believed it necessary and in keeping with his calling also to expound it.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY AND NOTES TO CHAPTER V

General Bibliography: The treatment here given is the first, to my knowledge, accorded to the migratory legend as a distinct and separate department of oral folk-lore. The materials will be found in the books and periodicals quoted in notes 1-5 in the bibliography of the local legend. Apart from the studies referred to in the text, the following monographs dealing with individual types of migratory legends should be noted: G. Huet, *La Légende de la statue de Vénus*, in *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, LXVIII (1913), pp. 193-217; *La Légende de la fille d'Hippocrate*, *Bibl. de l'Ecole des Chartes*, LXXIX (1918), pp. 45-59; P. F. Baum, *The Young Man Betrothed to a Statue*, in *P.M.L.A.*, XXXIV, 523 sqq.

- <sup>1</sup> *Balor with the Evil Eye*, pp. 165 sqq.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 181 sqq.; cf. *Folk-Lore*, XXXIX, 108 sq.
- <sup>3</sup> *A.R.*, IX, 342 sqq.
- <sup>4</sup> *G.R.M.*, XV, 54-8.
- <sup>5</sup> *Balor*, pp. 80 sqq.
- <sup>6</sup> *M.L.R.*, XXIII, 216-22; to the material there quoted I can now add C. G. Leland, *Etruscan Roman Remains in Popular Tradition*, London, 1892, p. 235, and *The Unpublished Legends of Virgil*, London, 1899, p. 129.
- <sup>7</sup> Bibliography in K. Wehrhan, *Die Sage*, Leipzig, 1908, p. 50. Cf. also A. M. Killen, *L'Evolution de la légende du Juif Errant*, in *R.L.C.*, V (1925), pp. 1 sqq.
- <sup>8</sup> *Mon Oncle Benjamin*, ed. Lucien Descaves, Lausanne et Paris, 1906, p. 141.
- <sup>9</sup> S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, London, 1877, pp. 447 sqq.; F. Liebrecht, *Zur Volkskunde*, Heilbronn, 1879, pp. 1-16; French version: *La Tour des Souris*, in *Bull. Acad. Royale de Belgique*, t. XXI, No. 11-12. Cf. also J. Cornelissen, *De muize en ratten in de folk-lore*, Antwerp, 1923.
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. H. Naumann, *Primitive Gemeinschaftskultur*, Jena, 1921, pp. 63 sqq.
- <sup>11</sup> Aarne-Thompson, p. 191, No. 1645.
- <sup>12</sup> *M.Ph.*, XXIII, 7-16.
- <sup>13</sup> S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, London, 1877, pp. 209 sqq.; P. S. Barto, *Tannhäuser and the Mountain of Venus*, New York, 1916.
- <sup>14</sup> Baring-Gould, *op. cit.*, pp. 579 sqq.; P. S. Barto, *op. cit.*, pp. 58 sqq., and *J.E.G.Ph.*, XIX, 190-200.
- <sup>15</sup> Wehrhan, p. 48; Hartland, *The Science of Fairy Tales*, pp. 170 sqq.; 207 sqq.; Fr. Kampers, *Die deutsche Kaiseridee in Prophetie und Sage*, München, 1896.
- <sup>16</sup> A. Graf, *Miti, leggende e superstizioni del medio evo*, Torino, 1892-3, II, 303 sqq.
- <sup>17</sup> *Historia Majoris Britanniae (De Gestis Scotorum)*, Paris, 1521, II, 6.
- <sup>18</sup> Holmström, *op. cit.*
- <sup>19</sup> Schol. in *Apol. Rhod.*, II, 477.
- <sup>20</sup> *Flateyjarbók*, Christiania, 1860, I, 339-62.
- <sup>21</sup> *Z.R.Ph.*, XLIX, 544-49.
- <sup>22</sup> *Z.V.V.*, XIII, 1-24; 129-49.
- <sup>23</sup> Chauvin, V, 2, 5, 6, 198; VII, 129 sq.; Tawney-Penzer, III, 194; VI, 5, 8, 56, 63. When I wrote this chapter I did not know of the existence of a Russian study on the theme: Walter Anderson, *Apuleja i narodnaja skazka*, Kasan, 1914.
- <sup>24</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, London, 1911, II, 155 sqq.
- <sup>25</sup> *N.M.*, XXVI, 13-18.
- <sup>26</sup> *S.S.N.*, IX, 113-15.
- <sup>27</sup> Cf. Campbell, I<sup>2</sup>, 105, No. 5; Bolte-Polivka, III, 375 sqq.; *Dolopathos*, ed. A. Hilka, Heidelberg, 19, p. 71.
- <sup>28</sup> *Etudes*, pp. 128 sqq.
- <sup>29</sup> G. H. Maynadier, *The Wife's of Bath's Tale, its sources and analogues*, London, 1891.
- <sup>30</sup> *Balor*, pp. 132 sqq.
- <sup>31</sup> *R.C.*, XLVI, 130-33.

- <sup>31</sup> *Etudes*, p. 131 sq.
- <sup>32</sup> *M.L.N.*, XLIII, 471-4.
- <sup>33</sup> *Romania*, LV, 260-63.
- <sup>34</sup> Ch. N. Gould, *The Friðþjófssaga an Oriental Tale*, *S.S.N.*, VII, 210-50.
- <sup>35</sup> G. Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt*, Frankfurt a. M., 1913.
- <sup>36</sup> J. Bédier, *Les Légendes épiques*, IV, pp. 19, sqq.; cf. *Romania*, L, 161-94; LI, 274-90; 481-510, LIII, 325-42; *Romanische Forschungen*, XXXIX, 433-80.
- <sup>37</sup> Max Deutschbein, *Studien zur Sagengeschichte Englands*, I, Cöthen, 1906; Jan De Vries, *Z.D.Ph.*, LIII, 257-302.
- <sup>38</sup> Aarne-Thompson, p. 157, No. 1161.
- <sup>39</sup> G. Paris, *Romania*, IX (1880), pp. 515 sqq.
- <sup>40</sup> *N.S.M.*, III, 223-58.
- <sup>41</sup> *M.L.R.*, XVIII, 152-61.
- <sup>42</sup> *Le Moyen Age*, XXXVI, 85-92.
- <sup>43</sup> *N.S.M.*, II, 119-24.
- <sup>44</sup> *B.H.*, XXVI, 305-11.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, XXX, 182-4.
- <sup>46</sup> R. M. Dawkins, *Folk-Lore*, XXXV, 209-48.
- <sup>47</sup> *R.C.*, XLIII, 124-31.
- <sup>48</sup> Th. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden, aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari*, Leyden, 1879, p. 83.
- <sup>49</sup> *Andarz i Aturpat i Mahraspandan*, 87; cf. *Luke XIV*, 7-11.
- <sup>50</sup> Aarne-Thompson, p. 120, No. 759.
- <sup>51</sup> *A.R.*, VIII, 386.
- <sup>52</sup> *A.J.S.L.L.*, XLI, 194-7.
- <sup>53</sup> G. Neckel, *Die Ueberlieferungen vom Gotte Balder*, Dortmund, 1920.
- <sup>54</sup> *M.S.G.V.*, XXVIII, 131-6.
- <sup>55</sup> *H.B.V.*, XXVI, 24.
- <sup>56</sup> *Rh.M.*, N.F. LXXVIII, 249-67.
- <sup>57</sup> Cf. Bolte-Pölvka, III, 201 sqq.; Gering, *Isländsk Aeventyri*, II, 166 sqq.
- <sup>58</sup> Appendix XVI.
- <sup>59</sup> Ed. A. Langfors, Paris, 1912 (*Les classiques français du moyen âge*).
- <sup>60</sup> *Die Braut von Rheinstein*, in Karl Simrock, *Rheinsagen aus dem Munde des Volks und deutscher Dichter*, Bonn, 1869, pp. 224-26.
- <sup>61</sup> H. Güntert, in his recent study *Kundry* (Heidelberg, 1928), pp. 30 sqq. and 42 sqq., points to the story of the Temptation of Zarathustra as the oldest known text and the ultimate source of all others.